

## Changing a Generation

How did a high school systematically affect change, moving from a graduation rate that was 69.1% and a four-year dropout rate of 34.2% to a high school recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* and the *Washington Post* as an exemplary high school?

**Focus on Freshmen – July 2017**  
Los Angeles, California

Rudy Ramirez  
Retired as Principal – July 1, 2016  
Indio High School  
Indio, California

## Indio High School

Home of the Rajahs



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## **Rudy Ramirez**

Graduate – UCLA

Completed 41 year in education.

High School Teacher, Counselor,  
Coach, Class Advisor,  
Jr. High School Principal, and  
Coordinator of Alternative Education.

Retired, in 2016, after 24 years as Principal of Indio High School.

I live in Indio with my wife Elizabeth. Together we have five children ranging from 36 to 8 years old.



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## **Why someone from Indio, CA?**

- Indio High School has used the Career Choices curriculum for eight years.
- We turned Indio High School around.
- Data - Will be shared.

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## Indio High School

"A Community Dedicated to Academic and Personal Success for All"

Grades 9-12

2015-16 - 1910

2016-17 - 2024

Rich Tradition - 50's/60's

Hispanic Population = 95%

Free/Reduced lunch = 88%

The School Belongs to the Community

### • Vision

- Safety
- Academics
- Physical Plant
- Principal/Administration - visible
- Perception (PR)

### • A Responsibility

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## How do you change a generation?

From...

### • Graduation Rate

1994-95 69.1%

### • Dropout Rate

1993 34.2%

### • Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

1994 (enrollment 2454)	Students	Exams	% Students
(10 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> )	48	55	2.9%

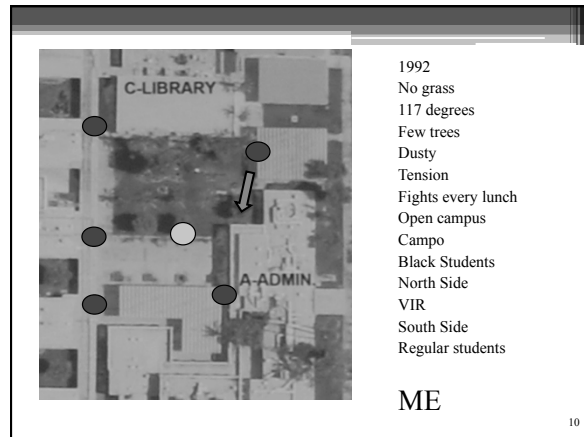
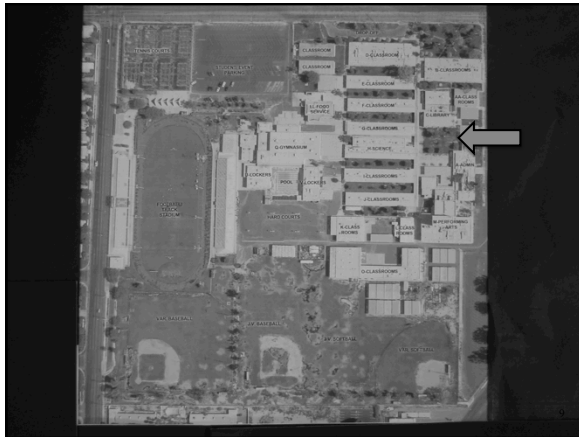
### • Access to the Curriculum

- Exclusive - HP/AP - D/F - Tracked - Dumb Down

### • Fights virtually every lunch period - The memo

- Open campus - Groups roaming the campus - Uneasiness was the norm

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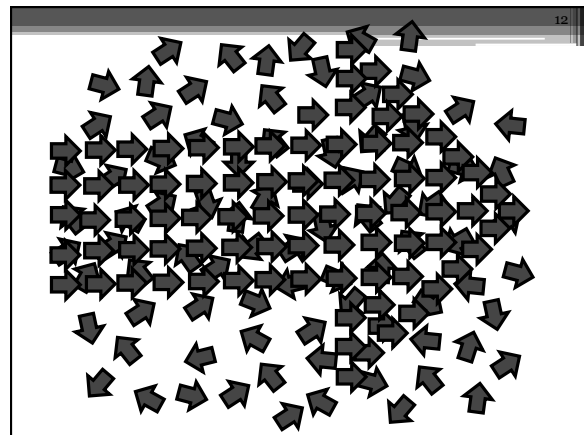
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Oceanside, California



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**Who are you?**  
**Why are you here?**  
**What are you looking for?**  
**What are you willing to do?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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## The Principal !?!?

- As early as third grade, I knew I wanted to be a teacher.
- The major influence in my life have been my parents. I remember my father always saying, "Education Education Education it is the most important thing in life." And I believed him.
- The idea that education was the most important thing in life was the driving force in my work with students. I lived and breathed education for 41 years, and for the last 24 years, I lived and breathed Indio High School.
- I wanted for my students the same opportunity afforded me. Someone years ago worked hard to open doors that allowed me to attend college. I too have wanted to open doors for my students.
- I wanted to make sure that when students graduated, they had opportunities and choices.
- "Why do you act like a principal at home?" The answer, "I do not act like a principal at home, I act like a father at school. The same values, morals, and drive I want for you, I want for the students at Indio High School."

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## What can happen in a generation?

### • Graduation Rate

▫ 1994-95	69.1%
▫ 2008	86.4%
▫ 2009	87.1%
▫ 2010	88.2%
▫ <b>2011</b>	<b>90.9%</b>
▫ <b>2012</b>	<b>90.9%</b>
▫ <b>2013</b>	<b>92.6%</b>
▫ <b>2014</b>	<b>92.6%</b>
▫ <b>2015</b>	<b>96%</b>

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## What can happen in a generation?

### • Dropout Rate

four year

▫ 1993	34.2%
▫ 2008	11.7%
▫ 2009	10.8%
▫ 2010	9.4%
▫ <b>2011</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
▫ <b>2012</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
▫ <b>2013</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
▫ <b>2014</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
▫ <b>2015</b>	<b>2.9%</b>

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## ↑ School's Academic Culture

### Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

	<u>Students</u>	<u>Exams</u>	<u>% Students</u> (10 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> )
▫ 1994 (enrollment 2454)	48	55	2.9%
▫ 2008 (enrollment 2706)	178	246	9.4%
▫ 2009 (enrollment 2688)	319	567	17.2%
▫ 2010 (enrollment 2447)	350	607	19.3%
▫ 2011 (enrollment 2297)	424	756	25.5%
▫ 2012 (enrollment 2110)	439	794	28.7%
▫ 2013 (enrollment 1989)	381	731	26.1%
▫ 2014 (enrollment 1999)	399	<b>859</b>	27.3%
▫ 2015 (enrollment 1866)	365	734	26.0%
▫ <b>2016 (enrollment 1910)</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>32.2%</b>

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## What can happen in a generation?

### • Academic Performance Index (API)

<u>1999</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
478	695	704	721

Over the 14 years (1999 to 2013), the increase of 243 API points...

...at one time the highest increase of any high school in Riverside County.

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## 2012 and 2015 and 2016

- *U.S. News and World Report* reviewed nearly 22,000, 29,000, and 28,000 public high schools and ranked the top 4,800+ highest scoring schools based on data such as enrollment and student performance on state proficiency and Advanced Placement exams.
- Indio High School was ranked:
 

2012 - <b>1,959</b> out of 22,000	Top 8.9% in the nation
2015 - <b>2,416</b> out of 29,000	Top 8.3% in the nation
2016 - <b>2,297</b> out of 28,000	Top 8.2% in the nation

Receiving a silver medal from  
*U.S. News and World Report.*



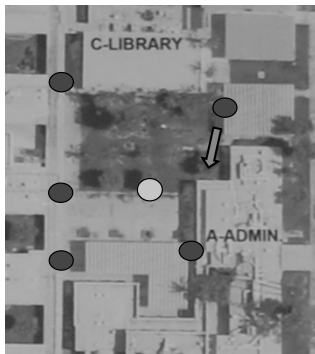
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## 2011 and 2012 and 2013 and 2014 and 2015 and 2016

- *The Washington Post* reviewed public high schools and ranked *America's Most Challenging Schools* based on data such as enrollment and student performance on state proficiency and Advanced Placement exams.
- 2011 - Indio High School was ranked **1807** out of 22,000 high schools, the top **8.21%** in the United States.
- 2012 - Indio High School was ranked **1536** out of 22,000 high schools, the top **6.98%** in the United States.
- 2013 - Indio High School was ranked **1287** out of 22,000 high schools, the top **5.85%** in the United States.
- 2014 - Indio High School was ranked **1323** out of 22,000 high schools, the top **6.01%** in the United States.
- 2015 - Indio High School was ranked **1396** out of 23,000 high schools, the top **6.07%** in the United States.
- 2016 - Indio High School was ranked **1400** out of 23,000 high schools, the top **6.08%** in the United States.

## **The Washington Post**

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1992  
No grass  
117 degrees  
Few trees  
Dusty  
Tension  
Fights every lunch  
Open campus  
Campo  
Black Students  
North Side  
VIR  
South Side  
Regular students

ME

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December 2014



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# Change!!!

Change is a process...

Change is not an event...

Sustained change is  
incremental...over time...

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# Principles

- Vision
  - Safety
  - Academics
  - Physical Plant
  - Principal/Administration -visible
  - Perception (PR)
- A Responsibility

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## Success is not an accident, it is by design!!!

- Consistent!
- Stay driven!
- Can not relax!

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If you want Change...

Change is:

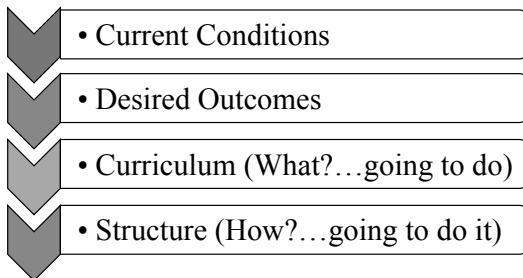
Created with Passion  
Driven by Data  
Guided by Leadership  
Supported by Staff Development  
- William Daggett

If you want systemic Change...

You must use a Change Process!!!

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## The Change Process



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## EXPECTATION(S)?

Want???

The best way to predict the future is  
to create it.

- Abraham Lincoln

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**Change!!!**  
 It does not just occur!!!  
 Success is not an accident...it is planned.



June 9, 2011  
 12:25 p.m.

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June 13, 2014  
 2:22 p.m.

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June 11, 2015  
 12:22 p.m.

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June 10, 2016  
 12:30 p.m.

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**By failing to prepare, you are  
 preparing to fail.**

- Benjamin Franklin

**Failing to plan, is planning  
 to fail.**

- John Wooden

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### **The Change Process**

- Current Conditions
- Desired Outcomes
- Curriculum (What?...going to do)
- Structure (How?...going to do it)

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## Words into Action

- Do not complain...do not whine...do something!!!!...  
Figure it out...make it happen...

- Limitations of the 6 period schedule
  - 8 period A/B Block schedule. (1 year)
- 9<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Transition Program, which includes a Freshman Seminar (Success 101) class for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders. (1½ years)
- Common Core and SBAC
  - Teaching Strategies
- Low AP numbers
  - Open the access to the curriculum
  - Provide support



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## Safety

Safety is an area where we do not compromise.

(When parents send their students to school, the majority want them back.)

- Lockers?
- Closed the campus.
- You have the right to...

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- You fought, you were arrested.
  - They know...
  - Talk to us – Very Important!!!

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## Discipline

The purpose?

Dispense punishment?

Change Behavior!!!

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## Expect Good Behavior Teach Good Behavior

- Closed the campus.

The practice...how?

- Explain and Expect

Assemblies  
Meetings



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## Connect and meet with all students the first week of school.

- Student handbook (agendas)
- Academics (college readiness, A-G, etc.)
- Attendance
- Discipline



- Connection
- One on One
- Accessible
- Open Door



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## We make decisions that are best for kids.

- If you and I benefit...great.  
If not, go work somewhere else.
  - Master Schedule
  - Start Time
  - Discipline
    - Purpose → punishment vs. changing behavior

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## Listen to the students

- Food and pizza.
- Rules.
- The direction.

## Explain

- You do not have to agree with what we do.
- You need to understand.

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## Academics

- Academics Academics Academics  
It is the only reason we are here.
- OPEN Access to the curriculum...CP/HP/AP.
- Opportunity.
- Unprepared...TEACH THEM!
- Teach the students in our class, not the ones you wish you had.
- Academic Support!!!

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## No.

- No.
- No.
- No.
- Be consistent...No.

- Be consistent...Yes.

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## Transition 8<sup>th</sup> grade to High School

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- Summer of 2008



9<sup>th</sup> graders - Freshmen

- 2008-2009 - Do something...Words into Action...Research

- 2009-2010 - Began a 9<sup>th</sup> grade Transition Program
- 2010-2011 - 2<sup>nd</sup> year Transition Program
- 2011-2012 - 3<sup>rd</sup> year Transition Program
- 2012-2013 - 4<sup>th</sup> year Transition Program
- 2013-2014 - 5<sup>th</sup> year Transition Program (Class of 2014)



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### The George Washington University's Freshman Transition Leadership Institute

- Rebecca Dedmond

- Step 1: Gather Your Resources
- Step 2: Create a Vision
- Step 3: Form a Team of Champions
- Step 4: Generate Community Buy-in for the New Course and 10-Year Plan
- Step 5: Identify a Curriculum that will Accomplish Your Course Goals
- Step 6: Recruit Your Most Experienced Teachers to Conduct the Course
- Step 7: Provide Professional Development and Course Planning Time
- Step 8: Make your Freshman Transition Initiative a School-wide Effort
- Step 9: Share all Students' 10-Year Educational and Academic Plans
- Step 10: Recognize and Reward

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...After a year of planning

...Developed a 9<sup>th</sup> grade  
Transition Program

...Using the Career Choices  
curriculum

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## The Focus?

- Who am I?
- What do I want?
- How do I get it?

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## Academics

- ↑ Rigor
- ↑ Challenge
- ↑ Raising the Bar
- ↑ API (Academic Performance Index)
- ↑ The Graduation Rate
- ↑ GPA
- ↑ School's Academic Culture
- → Address the placement of students
- ↓ The Drop Out rate
- ↓ The "F" rate

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### DATA...over seven years 9<sup>th</sup> grade – End of the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester 50% or more...F's

- 2009-10 (1<sup>st</sup>) → 180/enrollment 638 = 28.2%
- 2010-11 (2<sup>nd</sup>) → 110/enrollment 637 = 17.2% (↓ %)
- 2011-12 (3<sup>rd</sup>) → 85/enrollment 580 = 14.6% (↓ %)
- 2012-13 (4<sup>th</sup>) → 100/enrollment 531 = 18.8% (↑ %)
- 2013-14 (5<sup>th</sup>) → 91/enrollment 539 = 16.8% (↓ %)
- 2014-15 (6<sup>th</sup>) → 120/enrollment 450 = 26.7% (↑ %)
- 2015-16 (7<sup>th</sup>) → 70/enrollment 565 = 12.3% (↓ %)

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### Discipline

#### • Suspensions (Total school wide suspensions.)

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
16.3%	19.2%	15.6%	8.0%	10.3%

#### • Expulsions (Total school wide expulsions.)

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1.4%	1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.4%

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## Attendance

### • Attendance Rate

#### % of 9<sup>th</sup> graders absent all day

2008-09    2009-10    2010-11  
↓            ↓            ↓  
46.3%    27%    17%

#### Schoolwide

2011-12    2012-13    2013-14    2014-15    2015-16  
↓            ↓            ↓            ↓            ↓  
95%    94%    95%    95.5%    +96.21%

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## ↑ School's Academic Culture

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## AP TESTING

### • Spring 2008

- 178 Students took 246 Exams
- 60 Scores of 3+
- **0 AP Scholars**

### • Spring 2014

- 399 Students took 857 Exams
- 144 Scores of 3+
- **25 AP SCHOLARS**

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## Question? What do you want?

School  
Classroom  
Academic Culture  
Hallways  
Assemblies  
Lessons  
9<sup>th</sup> graders

**Success is not an accident,  
it is by design.**

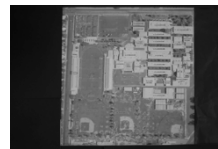
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## Physical Plant

### • 1958

- Major renovation.
- We are not a cookie cutter school.
- We are Indio High School!

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## **Question?** **What do you want?**

School  
 Classroom  
 Academic Culture  
 Hallways  
 Assemblies  
 Lessons  
 9<sup>th</sup> graders

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 it is by design.**

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## **What Do You Want???**

**You are going to have to make some  
 tough decisions!!!**

**Not always the most popular!!!**

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## **COLLABORATION**

**It might be a bit overrated.**

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## **One Attitude**

**We Expect Success!!!**

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## Important Question?

How did I do it?

I didn't!!!

We did it!!!

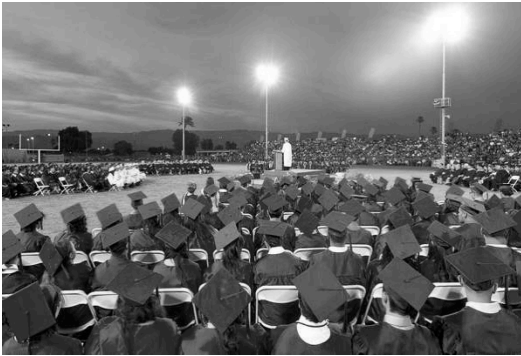
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Reason!!!

The Diploma



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## Indio High School



"THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD;

# Rajaks

AND THOSE WHO WISH THEY WERE"

-RUDY RAMIREZ



**THANK  
YOU**

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## Questions and Answers



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